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*F. A. Fordwin.*

CAMBRIDGE BRANCH  
OF THE *4369a.264*  
**Massachusetts Indian Association**

**HISTORICAL SKETCH**

PREPARED FOR THE

**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

WITH OFFICERS AND MEMBERS  
THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER

AND

**THE CONSTITUTION**

1911

---

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.  
CAUSTIC-CLAFLIN CO., PRINTERS  
32 Brattle Street







NAVAJO ROADSIDE SCENE



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# CAMBRIDGE BRANCH

## OF THE

### MASSACHUSETTS INDIAN ASSOCIATION

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MRS. H. N. WHEELER .....	1894-

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MISS B. H. VAUGHAN .....	1894-

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MRS. J. B. AMES .....	1896-

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 April 28, 1915  
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# HISTORICAL SKETCH

1886—1911

BY ELLEN S. BULFINCH.

The Cambridge Branch of the Massachusetts Indian Association was organized in 1886, and now after twenty-five years it seems well to report to our friends and the public what our work has been and what progress has been made.

From the earliest settlement of the country by the whites efforts have been made to Christianize the aboriginal tribes. Jean le Brebeuf and Gabriel Lallemant, the Jesuit missionaries who penetrated the wilderness and suffered martyrdom for the cause, were the advance guard of a devoted army. Spanish Catholics made a beginning on the western coast, and on this shore in 1646 the Apostle Eliot began his mission at Nonantum on the Charles River, then a part of our own Cambridge, and his Indian tracts and grammar and translation of the Bible were all printed here.

Well would it have been had such peaceful methods been allowed to prevail! But French and English rivalry urged on hostilities, and the Anglo-Saxon conquerors showed little inclination or ability to make friends with the red men. The tale of Indian atrocities is a dark chapter in our history, and so is the record of broken treaties and arbitrary oppression that marked our own course for many succeeding years. When, at last, after the War of the Rebellion, President Grant, in 1872, opened the way to a more humane and just treatment of these native Americans and offered, by the so-called Contract System, government aid to schools founded by religious bodies among them, an "Indian problem" had been evolved that baffled the wisest intelligence. The United States' change of administration every four years had proved an effectual barrier to any consistent plan of action. What one congress did was undone by another, and the frequent removal of Indian agents

prevented any continuity of training or discipline. Added to this the Indians were rapidly deteriorating in morals and in health by contact with a low type of white settlers that frontier life brought among them.

A few schools had been given them as early as 1819, and an Indian Commission was appointed in 1832, while missionary efforts were made in many places by individuals and societies, but the reservations were far away; comparatively few people knew what went on in those remote regions, how the whites were getting the best of the land, and the Indians were moved about like herds of cattle from place to place, their homes destroyed, their trade of hunting gone, their family traditions ruined. Their sufferings were long unheeded, but a better feeling had now arisen. Senator Dawes came to the rescue with his powerful influence, and as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" had aroused men to the curse of slavery, so now among other stimulating forces came "Ramona" and "The Century of Dishonor," to make clear our duty to the Indian.

A cry for reform arose, and as one of the results of this new enthusiasm the Women's National Indian Association was founded in 1880, and auxiliaries were formed in many states.

Mrs. Stephen H. Bullard, of Boston, became president of the Massachusetts Auxiliary, and at a meeting held here at our First Parish Church on January 21, 1886, when Mrs. Bullard and Miss Mary E. Dewey presented the cause, a Cambridge branch was formed, and Mrs. W. W. Goodwin appointed secretary. At the first regular meeting, on January 28, Mrs. H. O. Houghton was elected president. How animated and crowded with interest were our early meetings! The executive committee met monthly in the Houghtons' beautiful library, where, through numerous letters from Indian missions that were read aloud, we were brought close to the daily needs and vital problems of life at places as far apart as Alaska and Florida, Mr. Duncan's village at Metlakahltla, and the Apache prisoners at Mount Vernon Barracks.

The first work we undertook was to pay \$250 towards the salary of a teacher for the Indians at Round Valley, Cal., and at the same time we sent petitions to congress in favor of the passage of the Dawes Severalty Bill, and gave \$150 to the Citizenship Committee to further the same cause. We may well rejoice that we could lend a hand to this great achievement.



We were interested, too, in helping Miss Sybil Carter start the lace industries among Indian girls which have since become so successful. At the recent consecration of the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine, in New York City, a complete set of linen was upon the altar, elaborated in exquisite lace, the work of women of the Sioux and other tribes in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Then Miss Thackara's hospital at Fort Defiance deserved and won our cordial assistance, and we sent Christmas boxes, filled with good and useful things, to many different missions. Our gifts went down into the depths of the Grand Cañon, where the Yava Supais



THE MARY FISK MISSION HOUSE

cultivated their little plots, and up into the frozen north where Edward Marsden voyaged along the Alaska coast in his missionary boat. The names of many tribes appear in our records.

Our leaflet committee has done good service, through all these years, in sending reading matter, magazines like "Our Dumb Animals" and the "Youth's Companion" to many different agencies.

Public addresses were given in Sanders Theatre, and the churches have been always cordially opened for our meetings, as our recognized aim was to unite the women of all denominations and all parts of the city in unsectarian work for this great national cause.

It was not a popular one. Distrust of the Indians and indifference to their wrongs had become too firmly seated, but it was clearly seen at last by broad-minded Americans that to permit these children of the Stone Age to live in our midst, fed by our government, and credited with large sums of money in return for lands of which they were dispossessed, but making no effort of their own towards their support and with their children growing up in ignorance and barbarism, was to create an impossible condition, and develop a nation of paupers and out-laws in our own borders. The only security lay in educating them as far as we could, giving them the benefit of just and humane conditions, and assisting them to self-support.

Moving appeals came from the poor people themselves. "How many years have the white people known God's word? Why have they never told us before?" "There are better ways of getting a living from the earth than our fathers knew, and we would like to learn them. We can build good houses, with stone walls and clay roofs, but doors and windows and board floors were unknown to our fathers, yet they are beautiful and we would like to have them. We are also greatly concerned for our children. We would like our children to learn the Americans' tongue and their ways of work. We pray you to cause a school to be opened in our country, and we will gladly send our children."

One of the first steps was to work for a systematic method, and, if possible, to "take the Indian out of politics," and bring Indian appointments under civil service rules. Through all our early years, we urged this important measure in every way that was open to us.

The first great event after our formation was the signing of the Dawes Bill in 1887, for granting land in Severalty to Indians, "the Magna Charta of their race." Then came the overwhelming religious excitement among the Sioux, known as the "Messiah Craze," resulting in a hostile outbreak and the bloody battle of Wounded Knee in 1890. Among our early speakers was General Crook, who had met Indians in battle and known them as friends, and was glad to pay his tribute to their fine qualities. General Armstrong, Dr. Sheldon Jackson, Mr. Herbert Welsh, Miss Sybil Carter, were among those who came to give us of their knowledge and enthusiasm. Sometimes meetings were held in Sanders Theatre, and occasionally, through Miss Longfellow's kindness, at Craigie



ANNIE, MRS. ELDRIDGE'S INDIAN HELPER

House, where General Armstrong spoke to us for the last time not long before his death. Our treasury has been every year increased by entertainments or fairs, when Indian manufactures like baskets, curious pottery, native silver ornaments, and Navajo blankets have lent a picturesque distinction.

The death of Mrs. Houghton in 1891, took from us a devoted and enthusiastic leader, whom the cause could ill spare. Her place was filled at first by Mrs. H. N. Tilton, and then by Mrs. W. W. Goodwin, who had had much to do with giving the society its form and first impetus. In 1894 Mrs. H. N. Wheeler was appointed, and has been re-elected each succeeding year.

While we have lost many members whom we greatly miss, two of them should be especially spoken of here. We miss the beautiful spirit of Mrs. Asa Gray, and the radiant energy of Mrs. James C. Fisk. Both felt a deep interest in our cause. Both took delight in serving it with time and money and thoughtful counsel, and the inspiring influence of both quickened us all to do our best.

In 1893, the government having appointed field matrons to live on some of the reservations and teach the arts of good housekeeping and industry, we addressed letters to several of them, asking what they were most in need of, beyond the supplies furnished by the Indian department. One of the replies we received was by far the most interesting. It lies before me now, written by Miss Mary E. Raymond from Jewett, New Mexico, and is a real contribution to the history of the Southwest. She describes minutely the conditions surrounding her, the life of the Indians, their "hogans," sheepskin mats, grinding mills, the little patches of alfalfa, the few springs, the great need of water, leading to a wandering life in search of pasture for the flocks, the self-respect and independence of the people. "We brought side-saddles with us, but after trying them a few months and giving the horses sore backs, we bought good men's saddles and now ride astride. It is the only safe way, for we ride over rough mountain trails, and ford the San Juan River to visit the Indians." She writes of various plans for helping them. "You will think it a strange class of things I ask you for, if you can help us—money to buy a plough, a scraper and three or four shovels. . . . These people must have houses before we can teach the women to keep house, and a house is of little use unless surrounded by a piece of irrigated land. We would lend the im-



plements and in that way have them a help to a larger number of Indians than if we gave them away. We now lend axes, saws, files, etc., and they are always returned."

The money was sent, and thus began our connection with the large and interesting tribe of Navajos. From this aid to the desert Indians resulted what was known as the Cambridge Ditch, irrigating over twenty farms and making a beautiful oasis, so we are told, in that arid region. When Miss Raymond's marriage and



NAVAJO HOGAN

early death took her from the work she loved, it was carried on by her companion, Mrs. Mary L. Eldridge, in whose friendship and remarkable judgment and resolution the Indians soon learned to confide. She went up and down the San Juan River, supervising the putting in of crops and building of sorghum mills, securing from the government a chain ferry boat on the river, nursing the sick, consoling the bereaved, everywhere teaching right ways of living, and winning the people's love by her sympathy.

The Indians hold her in affectionate reverence. Always she has spent freely from her own personal funds for her people. Always, too, she has proved strong for defence when white marauders stole their cattle or settled on their land. One of her chief objects has been to secure allotments for them, that they may hold a clear title to their farms, for legal processes move slowly in frontier life, and the Indian occupants often meet with gross injustice, even now. In exposing such robberies and following up evil-doers she has shown no fear, and has won the respect of the best element in the neighborhood. "I have made enemies," she writes, "but some friends."

The Indians call her "Estson Nez." In a recent letter, when describing the trial of a very bad fellow by a council of the Indians, she says, "I had quite a compliment at the council the other day, when the Indians were talking among themselves. One said to the boy, 'You know you're bad, and why don't you own up? For Estson Nez is very strong (i. e. determined) and she will not let you off unless you do the right thing, and you can't scare her, for she knows she is right and is not afraid of anyone.'"

Her journeys have often been on horseback, with medicines in her saddle-bags, and she has made many a trip across the desert in her great double wagon, carrying water for men and horses when they were obliged to camp. Alone beneath the stars, attended only by faithful Indians, she has thought over her plans for the people and consecrated her life anew to their cause.

Passing lightly over the incidents of the last eighteen years—our temporary charge of the Rebecca Collins Hospital at Jewett, where we provided a room for industries, our interest in Mrs. Cole's mission at Two Gray Hills (another Navajo station), the numerous epidemics of gripe and small-pox with which our missionaries have had to contend, Mrs. Eldridge's visits to the "Mountain Indians," and her absence from our employ during the year she spent among them at Waro's Camp, it is enough to say that our work now centres near Farmington, New Mexico, where we have taken up and fenced land on the San Juan, and built a convenient adobe cottage, with cistern, etc., and a tent provided for hospital use, all in good repair. The mission is named for our friend Mrs. Mary Fisk, and here Mrs. Eldridge carries on her friendly aid to the Navajos. It is off the reservation, and therefore she is no longer in the pay of the government, but looks to Cambridge for her salary and in-

cidental expenses. Some years ago, she paid us her first and only visit, when we had an opportunity to talk with her freely of her work and its problems, and her grave and strong personality impressed all who met her.

Our central organization, now known as the National Indian Association, has gone on with its pioneer mission work and exerted a wide influence through its many branches. Each year we have sent to its treasury, as our dues, one-fourth of our subscription funds, and we have generally been represented by delegates at its annual convention. When this was held in Boston, some years since, it was a pleasure to welcome the members here, and show them the historic sites of Cambridge. With the Massachusetts Association we have always worked in harmony, sometimes assisting them in their plans and again receiving aid for our own enterprises from them, so that it has been a connection of mutual benefit and pleasure.

The vigilance of the Indian Rights Association has been an important factor in reform and, in spite of inevitable mistakes, friction and delays, the steady purpose of the government to do justice to the Indians and find the best men to take charge of their development has worked great changes for the better in the last twenty-five years. The reform which was then uppermost, and for which we sent petitions to congress and worked so valiantly, that of extending the civil service over Indian appointments, is practically attained. By slow degrees it has come about and it has owed much to Mr. Roosevelt's sympathy and influence when President. Ex-Commissioner Leupp now writes us that there is substantially nothing in the Indian service that can be used for political spoil and the divorce of the Indian establishment from politics is complete except as to a few positions at the head of the department, for which the President must nominate and the senate confirm.

More and more the influence of the returned students from Hampton and Carlisle is felt on the reservations, and with the power for good of the religious missions, the gradual allotting of farms and selling of surplus lands, the admission in certain states of Indian children to the public schools, and the thorough educational system of the government, the way is being prepared for citizenship.

We have seen of late a movement among ourselves that draws us nearer in sympathy to the sons of the forest, a growing delight in the open air and a sense of its health value, which gives us more respect for savage life than our forefathers had, and as the two races come nearer together and educated Indians like Dr. Eastman, the Sioux, and Angel DeCora, the Winnebago, interpret for us the customs and higher ideals of their people, we recognize the kinship of all races, their essential humanity and their common needs.

There is a finer appreciation, too, of the Indians' beautiful and vanishing arts, their symbolic baskets and woven histories, and a desire to preserve, while yet there is time, the records of their aboriginal life.

At one of our early meetings, General Armstrong expressed his belief that the strong native qualities of the Indian, his courage, dignity and self-control would some day contribute a valuable element to our American commonwealth.

Of much significance is the formation of the new "American Indian Association," called together by the advanced members of the race, Dr. Eastman, Dr. Montezuma, Thomas Sloan, Laura Cornelius and others, to consider questions vital to Indian progress. Only persons of Indian blood are admitted to active membership. This is a sign of the times that is surely encouraging.

Meantime, besides the need that still confronts us for helping forward the government's civilizing policy by innumerable friendly ways, there exists a great work which the government cannot attempt. The Contract School system has been given up and the government is now sparing neither pains nor expense in the Indian school system, building large industrial and educational schools like Santa Fe, Phoenix and Chilocco, with many smaller ones, making splendid efforts to check the ravages of disease and give thorough instruction in hygiene, but with all this great advance the Indians are rapidly unlearning their primitive religious beliefs with their commands and punishments, and are oftentimes given nothing in their place to inspire or to restrain. They are coming into the white man's road, but they have not his traditions of the Christian centuries and his belief in a moral order. Their old gods were gods to be feared and dreaded, but the idea of a God of help and beneficence, strength of their strength and "comfort of the pilgrim



soul," is new to them. Here is a strong appeal for more Christian missions, which the present commissioner, Mr. Valentine, warmly encourages. As our later Apostle to the Indians, Bishop Hare, of South Dakota, has said, "These people are an intensely religious people. You must not hand them over to mere civilization."

At the end of our twenty-five years we are glad to find our ideals more clearly recognized and steadily taking shape in the life of the present, and we are more and more grateful for a chance to do our part in a work for humanity and for the nation of such unique interest.

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Mrs. J. G. Thorp  
Mrs. C. R. Woods

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1911

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### RECEIPTS

Balance from last account .....	\$89.38
Fees . . . . .	219.00
Gifts . . . . .	734.00
Sale of articles . . . . .	24.25
Interest on legacy . . . . .	41.20
Interest in Trust Co. . . . .	6.85
Mrs. Fisk's fund . . . . .	71.29
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	\$1,185.97

### EXPENDITURES

Mrs. Eldridge for Fisk Home .....	\$840.00
General Expenses . . . . .	37.15
Christmas boxes . . . . .	30.00
Leaflet committee . . . . .	23.55
Indian Industrial School in California . . . . .	125.00
National dues . . . . .	55.50
Balance on hand . . . . .	74.77
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	\$1,185.97

SARAH R. AMES, *Treasurer.*

MARY W. ALLEN, *Auditor.*

## THE CONSTITUTION

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### ARTICLE I.—NAME.

THIS organization shall be known as THE CAMBRIDGE BRANCH OF THE MASSACHUSETTS INDIAN ASSOCIATION.

### ARTICLE II.—OBJECTS.

The objects of this organization shall be, first, to strengthen by every means in its power such a Christian public sentiment as shall aid our government in abolishing all oppression of Indians within our national limits, and in granting to them the same protection of law that other races enjoy among us; secondly, to aid in the educational and mission work pursued by the Massachusetts Indian Association.

### ARTICLE III.—WORK.

The general lines of work shall be, the circulation of literature adapted to the objects stated in ARTICLE II; the holding of popular meetings, and the publication of articles in the press, which shall promote the growth of right sentiment concerning our national and our individual duty to the Indians; and the adoption of such other measures as, in the judgment of the Association, shall seem fitted to further the objects named in ARTICLE II.

### ARTICLE IV.—OFFICERS.

This Association shall have the following officers: a President; Vice-Presidents, who shall represent the



various churches in Cambridge; a Corresponding Secretary, who shall keep the Association informed of the work undertaken, state to the Executive Committee what subjects she wishes to bring before the Association, and conduct the general correspondence; a Recording Secretary, who shall keep the minutes of all the meetings, notify the officers of their election and the Committees of their appointment, and prepare the annual report; a Treasurer, who shall have charge of all the funds of the Association and disburse the same under the direction of the President and the Recording Secretary or of the Executive Committee; and an Auditor. All of these shall be elected at the annual meeting.

#### ARTICLE V.—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the General Officers, the Chairmen of the several Sub-Committees, and such other members as the Association shall elect at the annual meeting.

The duty of this Committee shall be to manage the general work of the Association in harmony with that of the Massachusetts Indian Association and with its approval, and to vote the expenditure of the money.

The Chairman of each Sub-Committee shall report to the Executive Committee any plan of work adopted by her Committee, and shall be required to keep an account of the expenses, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee; the expenses to be met by the Treasurer.

The Executive Committee shall have power to fill any vacancies that may occur in its numbers during the year, or to add to its numbers if necessary.

#### ARTICLE VI.—MEMBERSHIP.

Any person may be a member of the Association by the payment of one dollar annually to its treasury.

The payment of ten dollars shall constitute any person a Life Member. The payment of twenty-five dollars shall constitute any person a Patron. The payment of fifty dollars shall constitute any person an Honorary Member of this and of the National Indian Association.

#### ARTICLE VII.—MEETINGS.

An Annual meeting of the Association shall be held in November of each year, at such place and time as may be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Other general meetings of the Association may be called by the President, the Recording Secretary, or any two members of the Executive Committee.

Regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held once a month, from November to May inclusive, at such time and place as the Committee may determine. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President, the Recording Secretary, or any two members of the Committee.

Twenty-five shall constitute a quorum at the meetings of the Association. Five shall constitute a quorum at the meetings of the Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE VIII.—AMENDMENTS.

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote at any general meeting of the Association, due notice of any proposed amendment having been inserted in the call for the meeting.















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